

Everybody Pays Taxes

Even these remote heights far to the north are reached by the Inca Empire's tax collector. The Quillacinga people have nothing to give, but in this vast kingdom, all communities pay tribute, in kind or in labor time. No one, however far off and however poor, can forget who is in charge. At the foot of the volcano, the chief of the Quillacingas steps forward and places a bamboo cylinder in hands of the tax collector from Cuzco. The cylinder is filled with live lice.

From *Rings of Fire*. Circa 1 BC.

